



# Florida House of Representatives

Representative Mark S. Pafford

*Minority Deputy Whip*

District 88

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Full Appropriations Council  
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Health Care

Healthy Seniors  
Appropriations Committee

Agriculture & Natural  
Resources Policy  
Committee

Military & Local Affairs  
Policy Committee

House Democratic Policy  
Committee

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June 4, 2009

The Honorable Charlie Crist  
State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Dear Governor Crist:

I call your attention to the plight of thousands of Florida seniors who rely on a host of services provided by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and community groups throughout the state.

Florida seniors comprise nearly one-fourth of the state's population. Yet despite their huge importance to our culture and economy, I am concerned that our state government does not yet fully fund the programs on which these individuals and their loved ones rely.

As a result, there are today approximately 30,000 seniors on waiting lists for services, with predictions that the waiting lists will grow significantly as our population ages.

Florida seniors should no longer have to wait. They deserve top priority when spending decisions are made by legislators and the governor.

As you know, it will be several months before the Fiscal Year 2010-11 state budget discussions get underway. However, I believe that now is the time for your office, Department officials, state lawmakers, legislative staff and community leaders to begin working together in earnest toward crafting a Department of Elder Affairs budget that enhances, rather than cuts, direct services and assistance for seniors.

Your support and encouragement toward this endeavor will go a long way toward improving health outcomes for Florida seniors, and I respectfully seek your involvement.

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I am concerned that the \$3 million in spending cut from senior programs in the upcoming 2009-10 state budget will drastically impact important services, including Florida's Community Care for the Elderly program, Florida's Alzheimer's Disease Initiative, Home Care for the Elderly, as well as many local service programs and various contracted services.

But despite my concerns about the immediate future, I am hopeful that if we are pro-active and work cooperatively, we can minimize long-term harm to seniors.

Throughout Florida, seniors are understandably concerned about their own circumstances, and they need assurances now that public agencies will be able to continue providing the help they need and the care that they deserve to receive.

I believe that starting this dialogue now will be a positive step toward honoring our seniors and providing them the assistance that they so desperately need.

Respectfully,



MARK PAFFORD  
State Representative  
District 88

cc: The Honorable Larry Cretul, Speaker, Florida House of Representatives  
The Honorable Jeff Atwater, President, Florida Senate  
Eric Eikenberg, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor  
E. Douglas Beach, Secretary, Department of Elder Affairs